

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AGR-20 IO-14 FEA-02 AEC-11 AID-20

CEA-02 CIAE-00 CIEP-03 COME-00 DODE-00 EB-11 FPC-01

H-03 INR-11 INT-08 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 OMB-01 PM-07

RSC-01 SAM-01 SCI-06 SP-03 SS-20 STR-08 TRSE-00

FRB-03 PA-04 USIA-15 PRS-01 DRC-01 /208 W

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R 272043Z SEP 74

FM AMEMBASSY CARACAS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6069

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E.O. 11652 NA

TAGS: ENRG, ECIN, VE

SUBJ: SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE PRESIDENCY ADDRESSES
THE AMERICAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

1. DR RAMON ESCOVAR SALOM, SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE PRESIDENCY, ADDRESSED A LUNCHEON MEETING OF THE AMERICAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE OF VENEZUELA ON SEP 25. THE TONE OF HIS SPEECH ENTITLED "LATIN AMERICA IN PERSPECTIVE, " WAS MODERATE AND CONCILIATORY.

2. AFTER REVIEWING LATIN AMERICA'S HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT AT LENGTH, DR. ESCOVAR TURNED TO THE ROLE OF MULTINATIONAL CORPORATIONS IN MODERN DAY LATIN AMERICA. HE SAID THAT THERE MUST BE A CHANGE OF ATTITUDE ON THE PART OF BOTH MULTINATIONAL CORPORATIONS AND OF HOST GOVTS IN ORDER TO FIND COMMON GROUND FOR THE BENEFIT OF BOTH. GOVTS MUST GUARANTEE THAT FOREIGN COMPANIES' INVESTMENTS WILL BE PROTECTED, BUT CORPORATIONS FOR THEIR PART MUST RESPECT INTERNAL POLITICAL AFFAIRS AND CONTRIBUTE TO HOST COUNTRY DEVELOPMENT. HE SAID VENEZUELA'S POSITION ON THIS MATTER WAS WELL KNOWN, ESPECIALLY AS

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A RESULT OF PRESIDENT PEREZ'S FREQUENT COMMENTS ON SUCH

MATTERS IN HIS CAMPAIGN AND AFTER HIS ELECTION.

3. ESCOVAR SAID VENEZUELA HAS ALWAYS BEEN RELIABLE AND PROMPT IN FULLFILLING ITS INTERNATIONAL OBLIGATIONS. FOR EXAMPLE, DURING WW II THE NATIONAL SERVED AS A DEPENDABLE SUPPLIER OF RAW MATERIALS.

4. REFERRING TO PRESIDENT FORD'S RECENT ADDRESS TO THE UN, ESCOVAR INDICATED THAT VENEZUELA ALSO REALIZES THAT THE WORLD IS INCREASINGLY INTERDEPENDENT. IN THIS ATMOSPHERE, VENEZUELA SEEKS A JUST AND BALANCED TREATMENT, BUT IT STANDS READY TO DO ITS PART IN SOLVING CRITICAL PROBLEMS THREATENING THE WORLD ECONOMY. VENEZUELA'S POLICY WILL BE CLEARLY AND RATIONALLY DETERMINED ON THE BASIS CONSIDERED JUDGMENT RATHER THAN EMOTIONAL REACTION. REFERRING AGAIN TO FORD'S STATEMENTS, ESCOVAR EMPHASIZED THAT VENEZUELA ALSO WISHES TO RESOLVE PROBLEMS ON A UNIVERSAL BASIS THROUGH COOPERATION RATHER THAN CONFRONTATON.

5. COMMENT: ESCOVAR'S SPEECH WAS SCHEDULED WELL BEFORE PRESIDENT FORD'S ADDRESS TO THE UN AND THE RESULTING TEMPEST OVER VENEZUELAN-US RELATIONS IN ENERGY MATTERS. IT IS SIGNIFICANT THAT ESCOVAR, AN INTIMATE ADVISOR TO THE PRESIDENT, REFERRED TO FORD'S STATEMENTS IN MODERATE TERMS AND STRONGLY EMPHASIZED VENEZUELA'S COMMITMENT TO ADDRESSING ENERGY AND OTHER WORLD PROBLEMS THROUGH COOPERATION. THE EMBASSY INTERPRETS HIS ADDRESS AS A FURTHER INDICATION THAT FOR THE PRESENT, AT LEAST, THE GOV INTENDS TO DOWNPLAY ANY FURTHER REACTION TO PRESIDENT FORD'S REMARKS. END COMMENT.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: SECRETARY GENERAL, MULTINATIONAL CORPORATION, SPEECHES, FOREIGN POLICY POSITION, MEETINGS, INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 27 SEP 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: izenbei0
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974CARACA09629
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740274-0213
From: CARACAS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t1974099/aaaaaham.tel
Line Count: 91
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: izenbei0
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 23 SEP 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <23 SEP 2002 by kellew0>; APPROVED <03 MAR 2003 by izenbei0>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE PRESIDENCY ADDRESSES THE AMERICAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
TAGS: ENRG, ECIN, VE, US, AMERICAN CHANBER OF COMMERCE, (ESCOVAR SALOM, RAMON),
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005